



OESNEWS

Governor's Office of Emergency Services

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State OES, National Weather Service & Humboldt County Slated to Conduct Live Test of Tsunami Warning System On March 26

EUREKA, CA — The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), the Humboldt County Office of Emergency Services and the National Weather Service (NWS) will join forces on Wednesday, March 26, 2008, to conduct the first-ever "live" test of the ability to warn California residents of a potential tsunami by transmitting the actual tsunami code instead of test codes.

The test will take place in Humboldt County between 10:15 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. with activation of the Emergency Alert System by the NWS office in Eureka, and will be transmitted to the public via local radio and television stations that serve the coastal communities of Humboldt County. Additionally, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Weather Radio All Hazards system will be activated.

Alerting the public about the upcoming test is paramount. Humboldt County residents who listen to radio or television during the test period are likely to hear the standard alerting tone prior to a message that indicates a test is under way. However, television viewers may not see the word "TEST" in the crawler at the bottom of their television screens since "live," rather than test, codes are being used.

"We are making every effort to alert the public about this test and make sure they understand that the announcement they hear on March 26th is a test and not an actual emergency," said OES Director Henry Renteria. "Testing the actual warning message code is critical to ensure we know exactly what will happen with our communication systems before an actual tsunami event," said Renteria.

"It is important that anyone visiting the area from other parts of Humboldt County, adjoining counties and other areas of the state and nation who hear the alert tone on that day understand this is just a test," added Renteria.

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2-2-2 Live Test of Tsunami Warning System

“Humboldt County presents us with a unique opportunity to pilot test this important communications exercise before expanding it to other coastal counties,” added Renteria.

Residents of Humboldt County are among the most familiar in the country with tsunamis and, according to test coordinators, the location of NOAA Weather Radio transmitters there make it very unlikely that the test message will bleed into neighboring counties or cause undue confusion about the test.

To prepare north coast residents for the test, representatives from state OES, the Humboldt County Office of Emergency Services, and the NWS have been coordinating a public awareness effort featuring flyers and public service announcements on local radio and television stations to inform all regional residents, including disabled populations.

Residents of Humboldt County have been encouraged to participate in the test by completing a survey on the test activity at: <http://www.weather.gov/tsunamitest.php>.

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The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates overall state agency response to major disasters in support of local government. OES maintains the State Emergency Plan, which outlines the organizational structure for state management of the response to natural and manmade disasters. OES assists local governments and other state agencies in developing their own emergency preparedness and response plans in accordance with the Standardized Emergency Management System and the State Emergency Plan.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 70 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the plant it observes, predicts and protects.

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